NSC BRIEFIN 31 March 1955
Approved For Release 7071478 EN-RPA 19800890A000500030067-6

BACKGROUND - SOUTH VIETNAM

STATUS OF DEFENSE MINISTER MINH

- I. Ho Thong Minh was chosen by Diem for post of defense minister largely on grounds Minh could "get along" with sects.
 - A. Perhaps "got along" too well. When
 Diem "ordered" Minh and Army to boot
 Binh Xuyen out of National Police HQ
 (order given 29 Mar; later countermanded
 at French and US insistence), Minh
 tendered resignation rather than comply.
 - B. After incident on night 30 Mar, dissident's communique (in name United Front Nationalist Forces) claimed Minh had resigned because he disapproved Diem's "high treason."
- II. Minh apparently out, although whether or not for good is unclear. Collins likes like
- A. Both US and French pressuring Diem to reaffirm MUNIS Defense minister.

 Approved For Rejets 200 2021284 CIA-RIAP 70 5008804 600500030067-6

 has never been really Pusted by Diem

SEE REVERSE FOR DECLASSIFICATION ACTION